



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/939,784	08/28/2001	Zhengchen Yu	033337-0125	2840
22428	7590	06/18/2004	EXAMINER	
FOLEY AND LARDNER				TRAN, DZUNG D
SUITE 500				9
3000 K STREET NW				PAPER NUMBER
WASHINGTON, DC 20007				2633

DATE MAILED: 06/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/939,784	YU ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Dzung D Tran	2633

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 August 2001.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-40 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-5, 14-24 and 33-40 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 6-13 and 25-32 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>5_6</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION***Drawings***

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the "optical fiber splice" on claims 15-17 and 34-36 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 39 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Srivastava et al. US patent no. 6,602,002.

Regarding claim 39, Srivastava discloses a combiner circuit for combining wavelength channels comprising: a first combiner unit (WGR1 of figure 2) for combining a first plurality of said wavelength channels ($\lambda 1$ to $\lambda 60$) to generate a first combined set of wavelength channels; a second combiner unit (WGR3 of figure 2) for combining a second plurality of said wavelength channels ($\lambda 61$ to $\lambda 100$) which are outside the band of said first plurality to generate a second combined set of wavelength channels; and an interleaver (210 of figure 2) for receiving and combining said first and second combined sets of wavelength channels to output a third combined set of wavelength channels (col. 3, lines 17-48).

Regarding claim 40, Srivastava further discloses the first and second combiner units are AWG (WGR1, WGR3 of figure 2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-5, 14-24 and 33-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Srivastava et al. US patent no. 6,602,002 in view of Kobayashi US patent no. 6,171,782.

Regarding claims 1 and 20, Srivastava discloses an optical network comprising:

a plurality of optical transmitters (col. 3, line 19), each optical transmitter generating a data signal sent over a respective one of a plurality of signal channels (λ_1 to λ_{100}), the plurality of signal channels being divided into a number of sub-bands (col. 2, lines 46-52) where each sub-band includes at least two signal channels (e.g. C-band sub-bands having 60 channels, see figure 2, col.3, lines 20-21)). Srivastava differs from claim 1 of the present invention in that he does not disclose a plurality of substitute signal transmitters, the number of substitute signal transmitters being equal to the number of sub-bands, each

substitute signal transmitter generating a substitute signal which provides loading in a corresponding sub-band and a combining circuit which combines the data signals output from the plurality of optical transmitters and the substitute signals output from the plurality of substitute signal transmitters into a WDM signal and an optical transmission fiber which receives the WDM signal from the combining circuit. Kobayashi discloses an optical apparatus having a plurality of optical transmitters (12 of figure 1, same as a group of sub-bands transmitters) and a substitute signal transmitter (23 of figure 1) generating a substitute signal which provides loading in a corresponding sub-band and a combining circuit (15 of figure 1) which combines the data signals output from the plurality of optical transmitters and the substitute signals output from the plurality of substitute signal transmitters into a WDM signal and an optical transmission fiber (8 of figure 1) which receives the WDM signal from the combining circuit. At the time of the invention was made, it would have been obvious to include the teaching of Kobayashi in the system of Srivastava. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do this in order to obtain a backup system for the transmitters (in case of components failure), thus it increases the stability of the system.

Regarding claims 2 and 21, Kobayashi discloses a monitoring circuit (17 of figure 1) which detects the wavelengths and power levels of each data signal in the WDM signal (col. 3, lines 34-41).

Regarding claims 3 and 22, Kobayashi discloses a control circuit (22 of figure 1) for detecting the trouble wavelength (e.g. detect when signal of wavelength cut off, see col. 4, line 64 to col. 5, line 13).

Regarding claims 4, 5, 23 and 24, Kobayashi further discloses a control circuit (22 of figure 1) controls the change-over switch so that the backup light source wavelength is substantially coincident with the wavelength of the optical signal to which the trouble is detected (col. 5, lines 3-52, col. 6, lines 42-48).

Regarding claims 14, 18, 33 and 37, Kobayashi further discloses the system with 100 channels and 4 sub-bands (figure 1, col. 3, lines 17-48).

Furthermore, whether the number of optical transmitters is at least 128 or the number of sub-bands is no more than 48 is obviously an engineer design choice.

Regarding claims 19 and 38, whether to have a laser having a frequency which is approximately halfway between a shortest frequency and a largest frequency in the corresponding sub-band is obviously an engineer design choice.

Regarding claims 15-17 and 34-36, Srivastava further discloses an attenuator 256, thus it would have been obvious to impose the attenuator 256, in the system of Srivastava and Kobayashi, between the substitute transmitter and the combining circuit for adjusting the output power of the substitute transmitter.

6. Claims 6-13, 25-32 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

a. Kim et al. U.S. publication no. 2001/0015836. Node structure of upgradable wavelength division multiplexing system

b. Otsuka et al. U.S. patent no. 5,841,557. Method and apparatus for scrambling the polarization of signal light

c. Cao U.S. patent no. 6,731,877. High capacity ultra-long haul dispersion and nonlinearity manage lightwave communication system

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dzung Tran whose telephone number is (703) 305-0932.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

Supervisor, Jason Chan, can be reached on (703) 305-4729.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9314.

Art Unit: 2633

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application
or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is
(703) 305-3900.

M. R. Sediqian
M. R. SEDIQIAN
Primary Examiner
Art Unit: 2633